3.13 TRANSPORTATION/TRAFFIC

This section briefly characterizes the existing and expected traffic generation of the proposed Dutch Slough Restoration Project, Ironhouse Project and City Community Park Project. It briefly describes the existing traffic network and trip levels on project area roadways, identifies the City's traffic goals and policies, and projects traffic levels that may occur upon completion of the various project elements. Parking also is addressed. Mitigation is identified as appropriate. The traffic and parking analyses for the City Community Park are at a conceptual level; additional CEQA review may be required when the final park plans are developed, or for special events.

3.13.1 Affected Environment

Existing Roadway Network

Access to the project sites would be from an extension of Sellers Avenue north of Cypress Road. Cypress Road is a two-lane arterial roadway that is a major east-west access across Oakley and which connects to Bethel Island. It would be reconstructed as a four- and six-lane divided arterial roadway in stages, and should be completed within the next few years. Sellers Avenue north of Cypress Road is currently a minimal two-lane road that also would be reconstructed. New residential subdivisions are being constructed along Sellers Avenue along with a shopping area on the corner at Cypress Avenue. Sellers Avenue will be reconstructed to a 60-ft wide collector street with a number of driveways, and with a bike lane – parking lane on each side. This roadway work would be constructed as a part of the commercial development, and also would include a dead-end connection at the end of Sellers Avenue where it connects to the City Community Park Project. It also would be completed prior to the construction of the Dutch Slough Restoration Project.

Existing Local Traffic Levels

Existing local traffic levels on Cypress Road and Sellers Avenue are approaching a critical condition where the roadway and intersection capacity standards are being exceeded. With the reconstruction of these roads, and the installation of a new traffic signal at the intersection, the roadway capacity conditions would be improved to Level of Service "A". Recent traffic studies of the Cypress Road corridor by the City of Oakley show that the intersection of Cypress Road and Sellers Avenue will operate at Level of Service "A" with the completion of currently planned residential projects. The long-range plans (2025) with full build-out of the corridor show that the intersection would operate at Level of Service "D", which is within the City standards.

Regulatory Framework

The City of Oakley General Plan has established Level of Service "D" as the acceptable threshold for future traffic conditions. The new roadways in this area have been planned and designed to meet these standards. The General Plan also calls for the consideration of bus transit routes, pedestrian and bicycle facilities, and neighborhood traffic calming measures to manage future traffic flow.

3.13.2 Impacts and Mitigations

Significance Criteria

The applicable transportation standard for the City of Oakley establishes Level of Service "D" as the maximum acceptable condition for signalized intersections. Traffic generated by the Dutch Slough Restoration Project, Ironhouse Project, and City Community Park Project interim Improvements is evaluated to determine the projects' impact with respect to this standard. CEQA Guidelines, Appendix G, also requires consideration of adequacy of parking and traffic hazards as potentially significant impacts.

Alternative 1: Minimum Fill

IMPACT 3.13.1-1: TRAFFIC GENERATION AND ROADWAY CAPACITY

The Dutch Slough Restoration Project and Related Projects would generally generate low volumes of traffic that are closely related to weather conditions and seasonal activities. The two wetland restoration projects would generate minimal traffic. The primary traffic generator would be the City Community Park. It is expected that the hours of operation of the park and the public access trails and would be from 5 am to 11 pm. Evening uses (after sunset) would be limited to the proposed sports field areas (seasonal) and to the historic zone (on a permit basis). It is possible that the ball fields may be lighted for seasonal play in the evening. The normal trip generation assumptions have been based on this use plan.

Trip generation has been estimated for the ultimate condition when the Dutch Slough property has been restored and is being used for park and recreation purposes. An estimate has also been made of trip generation issues during the site restoration stage that may occur due to short-term construction traffic impacts.

All vehicle access to the City Community Park would occur from a roadway into the Dutch Slough Restoration Project at the end of Sellers Avenue. For this traffic evaluation, it is assumed that a parking area would be provided near the Sellers Avenue entrance as shown on the site plan. The parking lot would be used as a staging area for recreational users, and for park staff and other visitors, as well as for users of the sports fields. The precise size of the parking lot has not yet been determined, and would be considered during the final design of the City Community Park.

During the weekday commute peak on the streets of Oakley, which generally occurs about 8-9 AM and 5-6 PM, the City Community Park would generate only about 8 vehicle trips, which would be split into 4 trips inbound and 4 outbound. The average daily traffic (ADT, 24-hour) in and out of the park on a weekday would be about 125 vehicle trips per day. These include trips associated with public access to the Dutch Slough Restoration Project.

The trip generation for this type of use has been estimated in the ITE Trip Generation Manual under the category of County Park (Land Use 412). Trips have been measured by using the park acreage as the independent variable. These studies have resulted in an average trip generation rate of 2.28 trips per acre, with 0.06 trips per acre during the commute peak hour. These studies of parks have generally been conducted during the heaviest seasons of the year. Separate studies have also been conducted on weekends and holidays. Using the ITE data, Table 3.13-1 shows the trip generation characteristics that have been assumed for the Dutch Slough Restoration Project area.

The resulting trip generation from the City Community Park, and the number of new trips at the intersection of Sellers Avenue and Cypress Road are estimated to be about 30 vehicle trips during the peak hour of park activities.

Table 3.13-1: Trip Generation Characteristics of the City Community Park[1]

		Weekday Commute Peak Hr			Weekend Peak Hour		
		(8:00-9:00 AM)			(1:00-2:00 PM)		
Development	Daily Trips	In	Out	Total	In	Out	Total
ITE Trip Generation Rates (Trips per Acre)							
Recreational Use – County Park (Trip Rate per Acre)	2.28	0.03	0.03	0.06	0.29	0.30	0.59
Total City Community Park Project Trip Generation							
City of Oakley Community Park (55 acres)	125	4	4	8	16	17	33

[1] The City Community Park trips include trips associated with public access to the Dutch Slough Restoration Project trails.

TRIP DISTRIBUTION AND TRAFFIC IMPACTS

It is estimated that the trips would be distributed about 70 percent toward the west on Cypress Road, 20 percent to the south on Sellers Avenue, and 10 percent to the east on Cypress Avenue. Based on this trip generation and level of new traffic, it can be concluded that the activities from the City Community Park/Dutch Slough Restoration Project area would not result in a significant traffic-related impact. This level of traffic is below the threshold where it would have a measurable effect on vehicle delay or intersection capacity (Level of Service). Similarly, the addition of this traffic would not statistically affect the results of models used to estimate air quality or noise impacts.

SHORT-TERM CONSTRUCTION-RELATED TRAFFIC IMPACTS

The extent of this impact is difficult to estimate. The major component of any construction- related traffic would be related to earthmoving and grading activities within the sites. Under Alternative 1, it is expected that the cut and fill would be largely balanced on the Dutch Slough Restoration Project and City Community Park sites, or amongst those sites and the Ironhouse Project site, so there would be very little off-site (off-haul) construction truck traffic. Based on this estimate of construction traffic, it can be concluded that the activities at the sites would not result in any traffic-related environmental impacts.

In the event of grading that required off-site hauling, it is conceivable that the number of truck trips during the heaviest period of activity could be as much as 30 truck trips per hour during a mid-day weekday peak hour. This type of construction traffic, estimated to be 15 inbound and outbound truck trips per hour, would likely travel on Sellers Avenue between the park entrance and Cypress Avenue. From there the truck route would likely be Cypress Avenue to Highway 4, and from there to a final site. Similarly to the findings above, this level of traffic is below the threshold where it would have a measurable effect on vehicle delay or intersection capacity (Level of Service).

IMPACT 3.13.1-2: PARKING

The City Community Park is planned to have a parking capacity of about 430 spaces. A parking management plan has not yet been completed. Some of this parking may be provided in a formal paved parking lot, while other spaces could be accommodated along the access roads within the park. Other similar parks with sports fields have created parking lots for about 150 to 200 cars, with the expectation that there may be rare occasions when parking is at capacity, and some vehicles may be forced to use nearby on-street parking.

The City Community Park may be used for occasional special events, such as the annual Almond Festival. This event could draw up to 5,000 people per day (spread out throughout the day). The Draft City Community Park Master Plan states that special events would occur in the park that would focus on the amphitheater and the areas near the concession stand. These special events "would support the central field as the focal place for events of 3,000 to 5,000 people at one time. Field areas and other places within the City Community Park could be used for overflow parking, but it is likely that that additional parking for such events may be required offsite. This occasional impact is considered to be less than significant because the City of Oakley would require a permit for such special events, and parking management plans would be a requirement of such a permit.

IMPACT 3.13.1-3: CUMULATIVE TRAFFIC CONSIDERATIONS

On Sellers Avenue, the City Community Park and Dutch Slough Restoration Project public access traffic would be mixed with traffic from the adjacent residential developments, and from trips from the shopping area at the corner of Cypress and Sellers. On Cypress Avenue, the future estimated ADT is about 35,000 vehicle trips per day (in 2025), based on the East County Traffic Model that is conducted by the Contra Costa Transportation Authority (CCTA). About 100 of these trips may be related to the Dutch Slough Restoration Project. This would not result in a measurable impact on the traffic conditions, and would not result in a cumulatively considerable contribution to the overall traffic impact.

Cypress Road would have a growing level of traffic as a result of the development of new housing in the Corridor. The total development in the corridor could be as many as 8,000 new residential units. Once again, the park and public access traffic would not result in a cumulatively considerable contribution to this traffic and therefore this would not be considered a significant impact.

Alternative 2: Moderate Fill/Preferred Alternative

IMPACT 3.13.2-1: TRAFFIC GENERATION AND ROADWAY CAPACITY

Under this alternative, onsite grading would be increased to about 1.32 million cubic yards, and about 360,000 cubic yards of imported fill would be required. This imported fill would be either trucked overland directly from the Ironhouse parcel or dredged from the adjacent Dutch Slough Restoration Area open water areas and, therefore, would not generate additional vehicular traffic on project area roadways. The traffic impact would, therefore, be the same as for Alternative 1.

IMPACT 3.13.2-2: PARKING

Same as for Alternative 1.

Alternative 3: Maximum Fill

IMPACT 3.13.3-1: TRAFFIC GENERATION AND ROADWAY CAPACITY

Under this alternative, onsite grading would be the same as for Alternative 2 (about 1.32 million cubic yards), and about 1.7 million cubic yards of imported fill would be required. Fill would be trucked overland directly from the Ironhouse parcel and supplemented by additional material dredged from the adjacent Dutch Slough Restoration Area open water areas. This transport would not generate additional vehicular traffic on project area roadways. The traffic impact would, therefore, be the same as for Alternative 1.

IMPACT 3.13.3-2: PARKING

Same as for Alternative 1.

Alternative 4: No Project

This alternative would continue existing uses on the project properties. No traffic or parking impacts would occur.